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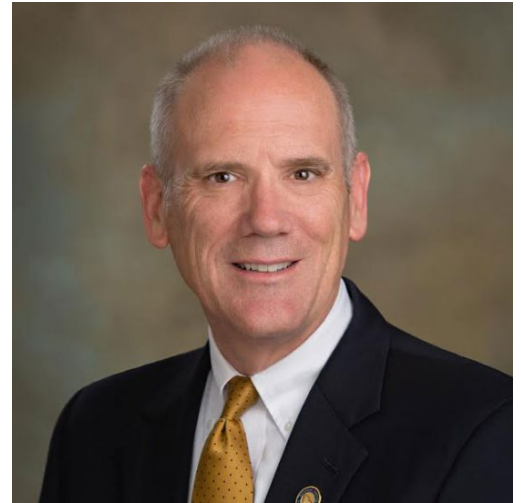
Taking Flight – June 2019

Message from the Dean

The venerable singer, songwriter and modern-day philosopher James (Jimmy) Buffett once said, “If you’re gonna fly high and without fear, you’re gonna have to learn to love the atmosphere.” It’s a cute rhyme, embedded in an upbeat song called “Wings” that will stick in your ear for days if it catches you at the right moment. Beyond that, though, it’s also an idea on which I’ve ruminated for years. What fascinates me is that we can be altogether dissatisfied with the status quo and yet, simultaneously, be reluctant to accept the risks required to change it. It’s an odd facet of human nature, I suppose, so much so that Mr. Buffett observed and wrote about it.

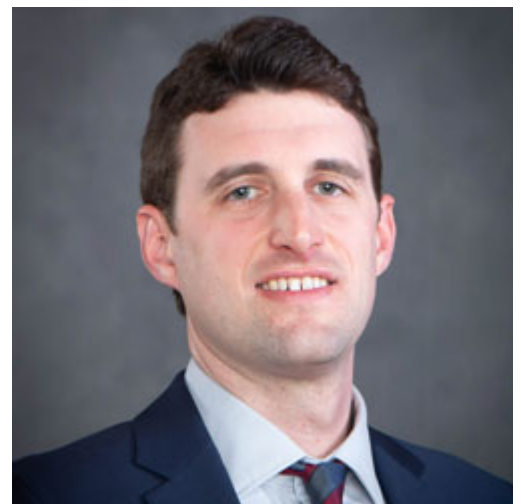
But what does this little rhyme have to do with the Parker College? Well, it reflects a challenge we face as we begin walking out the potential of our new name. Now more than ever, the aspiration of the Parker College is national prominence. Put simply, we want to be the best, distinct in our expertise and value proposition, and recognized across the state and country for our innovation and impact. We want to be a destination of first choice for the brightest students and faculty, a center of intellectual energy and creativity, with a reputation for practicality, for results and for producing a good return on investment. Make no mistake, it’s an ambitious vision, what Collins and Porras once called a “big hairy audacious goal.” It’s also a full on challenge to the status quo and to those who would defend it. But, all you need to do is look at the things we’re doing to appreciate our progress and to glimpse the potential.

Several of our programs, in areas like logistics, accounting, sales and marketing, economics and the MBA, are nationally ranked or recognized. Our business incubator has expanded and is building the startup community across the region. Our alumni network is growing in size and reach, as well as in impact by helping connect our students to the business community through internships, site visits, campus visits and hiring. We’re launching new programs, most notably in business analytics, while expanding in other areas like hospitality management and finance. Our students are traveling around the world and engaging global companies in larger numbers than ever before. Meanwhile, we’re pushing the envelope internally, asking important questions and finding new solutions through our research. Sure, this new approach and environment can feel uncertain, and even risky, at times. But, if you’re going to fly high, you’re going to have to learn to love the altitude.



Alumni Spotlight: Trey Scrudder

Trey Scrudder (MBA, 2011; FINC, 2009) works in the areas of bank supervision and regulation, conducting safety and soundness exams for local regional and community banks. In this position, Trey often needs to evaluate the safety and soundness of a bank as a whole, often considering the trade off from one component (e.g., earnings) to another (e.g., asset quality). It is much more than checking for regulatory compliance. In fact, most of his day-to-day duties revolve more around subjective decision making and critical thinking than performing a “check the box” type of review. Trey especially enjoys being able to review multiple banks in order to understand the specific risks, challenges and strengths of each institution. Since his job provides opportunities to play a variety of different roles depending on the area of the bank on which his work is focused, Trey also enjoys being a contributing team member on each bank examination. The greatest challenge in his type of work involves what Trey has found to be the most valuable skill needed in his job: how to handle contentious conversations in order to achieve a level of mutual understanding. In this area, choice of tone and words is incredibly important in constructively conveying his message. With disagreements inherent in the world of audit and supervision, Trey is most satisfied when he is able to take a challenging situation and resolve it by effectively communicating his assessment without being inconsiderate of others. In the future, Trey hopes to continue improving himself by becoming more efficient and acquiring more education. He wants to be someone on whom his co-workers can rely and look to for advice.



Though Trey believes that the team sports he played in his youth have helped create the goal-oriented team player that he continues to strive to be, he credits his business classes with teaching him to develop himself beyond the classroom. Classes in both his graduate and undergraduate programs encouraged him to read and keep up with the news of the markets. He remembers picking up the daily issues of The Wall Street Journal, then available in the business building, with instilling a routine of keeping up with changes in the economy and business conditions—a routine that is now an unspoken requirement of his job. Trey also acknowledges that the state of the U.S. economy (during the Great Recession) while he was in school had an undeniable effect on his development by providing very real and tangible lessons of the risks inherent to the business of banking. He says that Edward H. Sibbald's (retired director, Center for Excellence in Financial Services) bank management class was engaging and eye-opening especially in light of the state of the economy in Fall 2008, when he took the class. The course also cemented Trey's decision to pursue a career in banking.

Trey and his wife live in the Boston area. Weather permitting, they enjoy spending weekends at a nearby lake with their dog. They also enjoy travelling to Atlanta to take in Braves' games. In the fall, they try to attend at least a couple of Eagles' football games, frequently journeying to attend Eagles' out of conference games. This year, the couple plans to make the trek to Baton Rouge for the first game of the season.

Georgia Southern MBA Hosts Open House Events in Savannah

Working professionals in the Savannah area who are looking to advance their education and careers by obtaining a Master of Business Administration (MBA) can learn more about the Georgia Southern University Parker College MBA through upcoming open house events on the Armstrong Campus.



The AACSB-accredited program has been offering classes in Savannah for more than 35 years, now offering in-seat classes at the Armstrong Center on Abercorn Street in Savannah. The MBA program is also available online, but due to demand, the MBA program will accept its final intake of students on the Statesboro Campus in Fall 2019.

By continuing to offer its MBA program in Savannah on the Armstrong Campus, the Parker College is responding to its market. Program growth over the last few years has been from the Savannah area, and officials believe the program is now positioned to take advantage of regional growth opportunities. The Parker MBA Savannah program provides a curriculum specifically designed for working professionals taught by faculty who provide rigorous coursework with opportunities to learn from other business professionals. Students take classes as a cohort and can complete the program in about 15 months.

The Georgia Southern Parker MBA Savannah program has recently hosted several open house events at the Armstrong Center, Suite 217. The next open house events will be held on Thursday, June 27, 3 to 7 p.m., and Tuesday, July 16, 3 to 7 p.m.

The Armstrong Center complements the program by immersing students in a business-style setting. The Center has a state-of-the-art, 300-seat auditorium, several executive-style boardrooms and a video conference center. The first-floor classrooms are equipped with the latest audiovisual presentation systems, wireless internet service and executive-style seating. Meeting rooms, a banquet room and a large ballroom also make the space ideal for workshops, trade shows, exhibitions and other events.

For more information, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/businessgraduate, email mba@GeorgiaSouthern.edu or call 912-478-5767.

Georgia Southern's Master of Science in Applied Economics Ranked No. 11 for Top Online Degree

The Georgia Southern University Online Master of Science in Applied Economics (MSAE) was recently ranked No. 11 out of 25 programs across the country by the organization *Best College Reviews* on its list of Top Online Master's Degrees.

The AACSB-accredited Georgia Southern online MSAE program, housed in the Parker College of Business, allows for geographic and schedule flexibility, as well as strong academics and stackable credentials. The program, which can be completed in a minimum of five semesters, is fully online with small classes that are fully asynchronous.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, economists made an average salary of just over \$100,000 per year in 2017. Jobs for qualified professionals in the field are steadily increasing.

"We are very proud to be able to offer a high-quality program at an affordable price," said Amanda King, Ph.D., associate professor of economics and MSAE coordinator. "Students who complete our program have a marketable analytical skill set that allows them to make business decisions in a diverse and changing data-driven world."

A pool of 38 programs was evaluated by *Best College Reviews*' editors, then narrowed down to 25. Institutions were awarded points based on affordability, national recognition, scheduling options, course delivery and specialization options, among other criteria, and the points were added to create the list.

For more information about the Online MSAE, visit [GeorgiaSouthern.edu/parker/msae](https://georgiasouthern.edu/parker/msae).



Sales Education Foundation Names Georgia Southern University a "Top University Sales Program"

Sales Education Foundation (SEF) has recognized Georgia Southern University as a 2019 "Top University Sales Program." SEF has recognized our Center for Sales Excellence for preparing students for successful careers in professional selling since 2011 and helps to evaluate the sales profession.

The Center for Sales Excellence in the Georgia Southern Parker College of Business boasts a 98 percent placement rate for its sales students. Students participate throughout the year in various regional and national sales competitions, giving them the experience needed to succeed once they have graduated. According to a survey of sales managers, sales program graduates "ramp up" 50 percent faster than their non-sales educated peers and experience 30 percent less turnover. In addition to participating in sales competitions, the Parker College of Business sales program also offers a sales lab for its students.



Founded in 2006, the Center for Sales Excellence, housed within the Parker College of Business, has more than 200 students and offers accreditation through the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), full membership in the University Sales Center Alliance (USCA) and offers its students a professional fraternity, Pi Sigma Epsilon, for marketing and sales management industry professionals. Georgia Southern is also the only university to award Huthwaite's Academic SPIN Selling Certification.

Executive Director Sally Stevens noted that SEF has seen tremendous growth during the past 13 years since the first SEF listing featured 27 universities meeting basic criteria. "Fast forward 13 years and you'll find 134 North American universities in the 2019 listing. In addition, there are 16 International universities featured," she said in the 2019 Annual Letter from the editor. "We continue our tradition of collecting, analyzing and sharing data on these universities who provide high quality professional sales education to their students."

For more information on partnerships with the Georgia Southern University Center for Sales Excellence in the Parker College of Business, contact Linda G. Mullen, Ph.D., director of the Center for Sales Excellence, at lgmullen@georgiasouthern.edu. To learn more about the growing sales education space, visit www.salesfoundation.org.

Georgia Southern University Ranked in Top 20 for 2019 Online Master's in Accounting Programs

The Georgia Southern University online Master's of Accounting (WebMAcc) program has been ranked No. 15 by *BestMastersPrograms.org* in its 2019 Top 25 Master's Online Accounting ranking list.

The AACSB-accredited WebMAcc program started in 2013 and is geared toward working professionals. The 30-credit hour program features 100 percent online coursework and accepts incoming students during fall and spring semesters. The program follows a cohort model using a team-based approach to online learning. By mirroring the on-campus program, the WebMAcc is taught by the same experienced faculty with the same access to campus resources.

This ranking by *Best Master's Programs* serves as a guide for working adults to the best accredited online master of accounting programs. In addition to considering accreditation, editors ranked programs according to alumni salary (College Scorecard), cost (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) and student reviews (Niche).

"The faculty and staff involved with graduate programs within the School of Accountancy and the Parker College of Business at Georgia Southern University work diligently to provide an exceptional graduate education through dynamic teaching, relevant coursework and exciting professional experiences," stated Brit McKay, Ph.D., professor of accounting and MAcc coordinator. "Our No. 15 ranking is a direct result of the hard work of not only the faculty and staff but also the students we serve."

Accountants are in high demand, with the employment of accountants and auditors projected to grow 10 percent from 2016 to 2026, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Accountants earn a median annual salary of around \$70,000. In order to be eligible to sit for the CPA exam, students must have 150-credit hours, often meaning earning a master's degree is necessary.

The Georgia Southern University School of Accountancy housed within the Parker College of Business is independently accredited by AACSB International. To learn more about Georgia Southern's Parker College of Business graduate programs, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/businessgraduate.



BIG Expands to Metter

Georgia Southern recently partnered with the City of Metter to create the University's third business incubator. The Metter Public Works Department building is being transformed into a space for start-up business owners to take their businesses to the next level. This incubator will be geared toward "Georgia Grown" agribusinesses. Business owners will have the opportunity to work closely with Georgia Southern professors and the Business Innovation Group for input on product development, idea implementation and anything else they might need.

The Business Innovation Group hopes to provide a space for businesses to grow and allows them to offer advice on business planning, financial planning, training and access to additional business resources. One business has already signed for space in the Metter incubator, and Georgia Southern's Business Innovation Group is looking forward to seeing additional clients sign on. Georgia Southern's Director of Business Innovation Dominique Halaby says that he hopes the new incubator can be used as a starting ground for local businesses. "We want to make it to where they graduate out, get the services they need to grow and then find another location in their wonderful community to occupy, so they can open up space for someone else to grow," says Halaby.

A feasibility study completed by Georgia Southern's Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research (CBAER) found that Metter had a number of "hidden gems" in the local business community, and the incubator could provide positive diversification for the local economy. The results of this study found that the City of Metter



is a strong candidate to support a local business incubator, and Georgia Southern is excited to have the opportunity to expand its reach into this area.

The incubator should be ready for move-in sometime this summer.

Georgia Southern Hosts Inaugural Gratitude Gala Donor Awards, Celebrates Individual, Corporate Philanthropy

from the University Newsroom

Georgia Southern University hosted its inaugural Gratitude Gala Donor Awards to recognize key donors based on their longtime support of institutional initiatives. The event was held on Saturday, May 18, at the Perry Lane Hotel in Savannah.

Vice President of Advancement Trip Addison welcomed the honorees, which included three individuals and one corporation.

"Tonight, we honor those who have truly invested in Georgia Southern and Armstrong State University," said Addison. "The Gratitude Gala represents the coming together of donors from both institutions. We recognize those whose generosity and philanthropic spirit has helped elevate our university. Helping our students has always been their top priority."

Addison then introduced math and biology major Katherine Barrs, a recipient of the 1906 Scholarship, which is funded by several donors and covers the cost of tuition for four years.

"We are here to celebrate the generosity of university donors and show our gratitude," said Barrs. "I have certainly been on the receiving end of their generosity. I would like to thank them and express my appreciation for all that they do."

The 2019 recipients are:

2019 Legacy Member Honoree: Gail Reed

Gail Reed, a native of Augusta, Georgia, was honored for her deferred charitable commitment to the Parker College of Business and the School of Accountancy. Reed, a longtime supporter of Georgia Southern, has served on the boards of several university organizations and endowed a scholarship for accounting majors in the University Honors Program. Reed owns Gail U. Reed, CPA, PC, a public accounting practice that specializes in accounting and taxation for individuals, businesses and estates.

2019 President's Ambassador Honoree: Donald Anderson

Donald Anderson, Ed.D. ('59), was awarded for his ongoing support of the Athletics Department. Anderson began his career at Armstrong State College in 1966 and served as an associate professor, acting head of the Department of Education, dean for Community Services and registrar and director of Admissions. He joined the Athletic Department in 1992 as an academic advisor for student athletes and was inducted into the Armstrong State University Athletic Hall of Fame as a Citation Award winner in 1996 for his service and philanthropy. Armstrong honored him further by awarding its top male and female student athletes with the annual Dr. Don Anderson Scholar-Athlete Award.

2019 President's Innovator Honoree: Georgia Power

Georgia Southern, Armstrong State and Georgia Power have a long history of partnership. Georgia Power has been a loyal supporter of both institutions by providing annual funds to be used in the areas of greatest need. In addition, Georgia Power endowed the Georgia Power Chris Hobson Honorary Scholarship for outstanding chemistry students. The company recently outlined a 20-year plan focusing on the delivery of clean, safe, reliable and affordable energy. As such, it has turned its attention to funding scholarships in the area of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

2019 President's Visionary Honoree: Betty Foy Sanders



(l-r): Georgia Southern University President Kyle Marrero, Georgia Power representatives Truitt Eavenson and Ronny Just, Gail U. Reed, Donald Anderson and Trish Carter, who accepted an award on behalf of Betty Foy Sanders

For more than 50 years, Statesboro native Betty Foy Sanders has fostered her love of learning for art with students at Georgia Southern. When her late husband, former Georgia Gov. Carl Sanders was in office, she dedicated her efforts toward the construction of several fine arts buildings within the University System of Georgia, including the Foy Fine Arts Building on Georgia Southern's Statesboro Campus. Over the years, her generosity has continued to grow. Her gifts enabled the university to name the Art Department the Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art. She has endowed scholarships, as well as student art travel and visiting artist funds. In addition, her artwork can be seen throughout numerous buildings on campus and in the Center for Art and Theatre.

Georgia CEO Q2 2019 Survey Finds Confidence Levels in Business Conditions Remain High While Managing Growth is a Challenge

Confidence levels in the business conditions of the Georgia economy remain high and participants think most upcoming challenges are related to business growth, according to a recent survey of *Georgia CEO* readers working in the state of Georgia.

The Business Confidence Survey is prepared for *Georgia CEO* by the Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research (CBAER), a subdivision of the Business Innovation Group (BIG) at Georgia Southern University. A convenience sampling technique is used in the survey, and respondents are asked to rate their concerns over upcoming or ongoing issues that may affect the growth and profitability of Georgia businesses.



"If we look at the overall impression of the current environment, we see that respondents are confident about the overall business environment moving forward," said Ben McKay, CBAER assistant director. "The concerns expressed most by those surveyed are finding, hiring and retaining good employees. In total, 94 percent view business conditions improving or unchanged, and we see that successfully managing and maintaining growth is at the forefront of business leaders' minds."

Growth indicators — such as an increase in the percentage of participants with positive sentiments related to the volume of business, sales, financial health, profitability and access to capital — are improving when respondents are asked for their future outlook. The strongest indicator was the volume of business, which 60 percent of all participants expect to grow in the future. That figure is up from 51 percent compared to the first quarter of 2019. Fifty-seven percent of respondents said they expect to see growth in sales, up from 47 percent in the first quarter of this year.

Optimism is shrinking about hiring quality employees, which is dampening an otherwise overall positive outlook. Less than 45 percent of respondents said they see these situations improving over the next quarter.

"Maintaining good relationships with key employees will be crucial moving forward — especially as businesses manage growing sales numbers and client bases," said McKay. "It will be important to have trusted, reliable employees managing growth while looking for quality players to add to the team."

BIG and CBAER are components of the Parker College of Business at Georgia Southern University. Georgia Southern is a research university with more than 25,000 students on three campuses in Statesboro, Hinesville and Savannah. The questionnaire was emailed to subscribers of each of the 12 *Georgia CEO* daily newsletters. *Georgia CEO* publishes newsletters in Albany, Athens, Atlanta, Augusta, Columbus, Gainesville, Middle Georgia, Newnan, Rome, Savannah, Tifton and Valdosta. The survey was open from April 2 through 19. In total, 102 valid responses were recorded.

Faculty/Staff News

Rongrong Zhang, Ph.D., CFA, associate professor of finance, led the discussion of a paper, "The Effect of U.S. Public-to-Private Leverage Buyouts on Innovation," at the Twelfth Annual Conference on Innovation Economics organized and cohosted by the Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law in Chicago and United States Patent and